

2009 Alberta Volleyball Hall of Fame Award

Category: Builder

Inductee: George Tokarsky

George's volleyball career began with the Phoenix Volleyball Club in Edmonton in the early 1970's. In 1978, at thirty-one years of age, he became the oldest rookie to ever put on a University of Alberta Golden Bear's uniform. Upon completion of his University volleyball career, George played on a number of club teams in Edmonton before forming his own squad in 1986. His team, comprised of a number of his former Golden Bear teammates, was christened FOG (Friends of George).

The FOG name was incorporated in 1991 as a registered society. Since that time, FOG volleyball has been considered the preeminent senior volleyball club in Edmonton. Over the years FOG has won nine National Senior Men's Championships (1997, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009), four National Masters Men's Championships (2003, 2004, 2005, 2009), three National Masters Women's Championships (2000, 2004, 2009), one 20U Men's National Championship (2007), several Provincial Titles, as well as multiple US Open National Championships. George himself has been involved (either by coaching and/or playing) on most of these championship teams. In fact, in 1997 at age 50, George astounded the volleyball community by playing in the gold medal match of the Senior Men's National Championships, a testament to his fitness, longevity and passion for the game.

George extended his involvement in Master's volleyball to the International level when he founded the Canadian Masters National Team program in 1998. In 2002, the program played in it's first international volleyball competition when the Canada-USA Continental Masters Cup was born. In its original two-team version, the Continental Masters Cup was a competition for the Men's 50's age division. Since this initial event, participation in International Masters competition has evolved into multiple events at many age divisions. The most recent version of the Men's 50's age division saw seven countries compete in the "50's Continental Cup".

In addition to his involvement in Senior & Masters competition, George also provides financial support to the volleyball community. He helped to establish the annual Jasper Volleyball Camp scholarships as well as multiple scholarships with the University of Alberta Golden Bears & Pandas volleyball teams. These scholarships allow many athletes to continue to participate in the sport they love.

In 1999 George saw the need for increased programming at the youth level. Consequently, he established youth divisions within his FOG club. FOG's youth programming currently has over 250 athletes on 24 teams participating in the Alberta Volleyball Club system. Aside from these 13U-18U teams, FOG also hosts a recreational league for 15-18 year old girls, as well as a mini-volleyball program for 10-12 year olds.

George's hard work and dedication has provided countless opportunities to athletes of ALL ages to participate in volleyball - his efforts and passion for our sport has had a profound impact not only in Edmonton but throughout Alberta and Canada.

